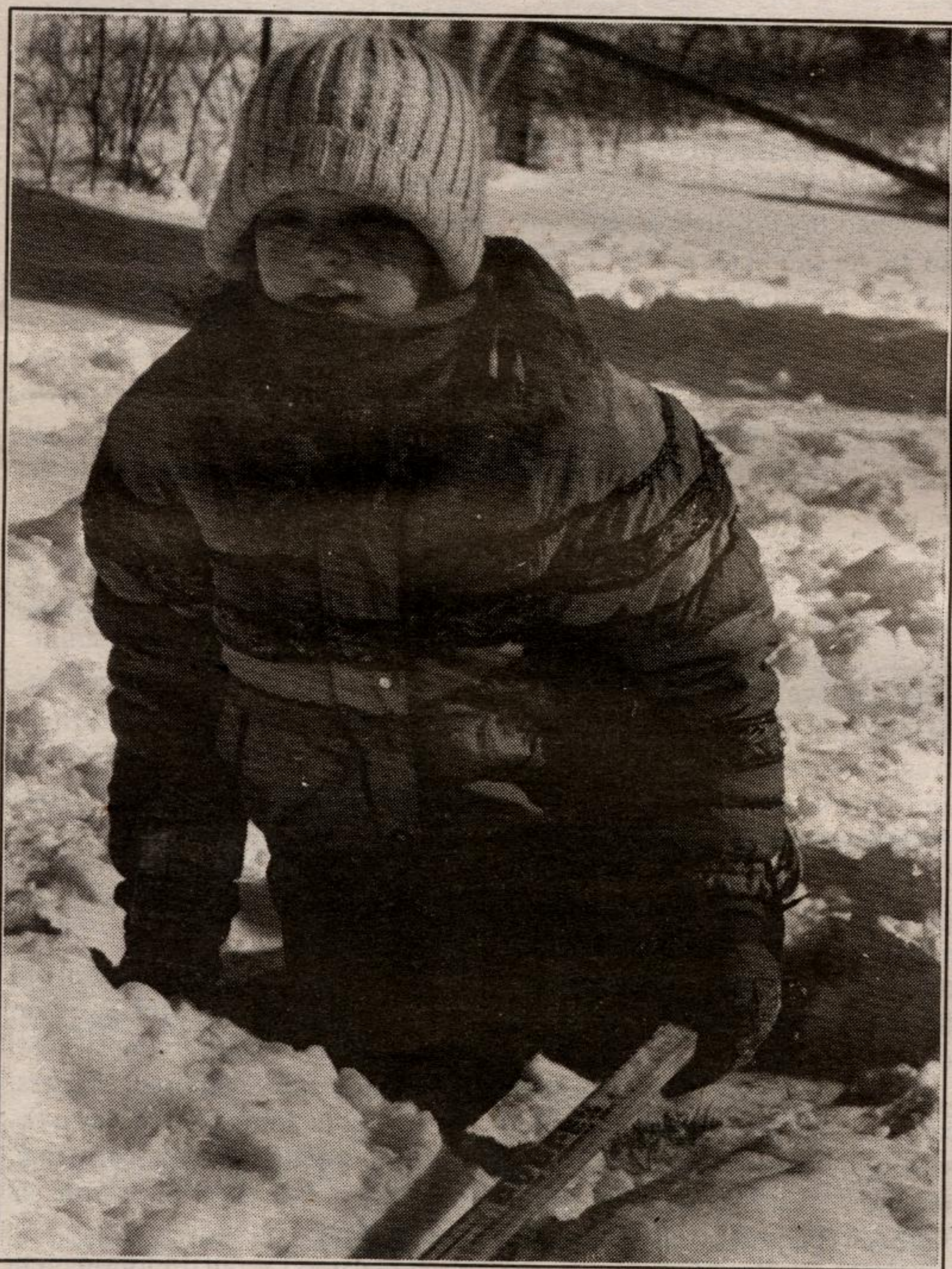




ONE LAST DAY OF WINTER FUN!

Eramosa Public School held its annual winter carnival last Thursday. Grade 6 students ran the events, which included a polar bear hug, slalom and hockey shootout. Above, Lucas Buschbeck, 9, was all smiles sliding in the snow for the seal race. Andrea Jackson, also 9, readies to slide a hockey stick through a path of snow in the snow snake event. (Doug Harrison photos)



Art teacher focuses on the basics

BY KAREN WETMORE
The Rockwood Miller

Learning to draw is the same as learning any of the three "R's," says art teacher Vija Celmins.

The 10-year Rockwood resident has been offering drawing and watercolour painting lessons at The Studio on Main for the past four years. She believes drawing is another skill like reading and writing.

"If you can draw, you're not necessarily an artist," Celmins said. "It's the same with writing - just because you can make letters, doesn't make you a poet."

Celmins works on the basics with all of her new students. This includes learning how to look at something and draw what you see, rather than what you think you're seeing.

"Our knowledge gets in the way of what our intuition would have us believe," she said.

Celmins, a certified teacher, says she would love to be able to teach art in the school system, a place where she says art is often treated as an easy credit and students are left on their own.

Her classes, offered to people of any age, begin with a structured lesson and are followed by a chance

to use that new knowledge creatively. Often she will have her students draw something, for example a face, before the lesson and do the same thing at the end of the lesson. Improvement is immediate.

"They're so stunned - they can't believe that they actually drew something that much better. Their ability to focus also improves," she said.

Celmins' interest in art has been a lifelong one, but she has only recently devoted herself to it. She studied math and theoretical physics in university, before graduating with a degree in genetics. She has also earned a college diploma in graphic arts and a master's degree in

landscape architecture at the University of Guelph.

Her classes are small, with no more than seven students, to give her the opportunity to interact with each student. But although there will be improvement, Celmins says drawing is not something you can learn in a 10-week course.

"It's just like saying you wouldn't be able to play Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* in 10 weeks if you've never played piano before," she said.

Celmins is offering drawing and watercolour painting lessons beginning April 1. The registration deadline is March 22. Call 856-9044 or 856-4683 for more information.

Natural history slide show

Fergus nature photographer/musician Wayne Bridge will present an illustrated talk on the natural history of the area - "Flora and Fauna of Wellington County: Now and Then" at the Wellington County Museum Sunday, March 24 at 2:30 pm. This marks the first presentation of the year for the Wellington County Historical Society.

Bridge began serious bird-watching 10 years ago, when he moved to the country from Guelph. This resulted in a logical progression to nature photography and a two-year diploma from the New York Institute of Photography. Bridge also teaches and composes music.

His natural history presentation, based on slides, is of interest to all age groups and is open to the public, free of charge.



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